



I Love You, Peter's Creation

Сергей Орехов (Панкратиус)

I love you, Peter's creation,
where the bright Neva's waters flow
and carry through time a revelation —
that this City is Love's living call.

Here stone breathes, the bridge resounds,
the dome is like the eye of God.

Here every step, as in the silence, sounds
a prayer, hidden from the Final Word.

The Fontanka runs like the speech of John,
Isaac's cathedral groans, a muffled psalm,
and the bronze apostle, free of all deceit,
whispers: "The world is not the sword, but Home."

I love you, O living town,
where the cross does not crush, but shines.
You are a temple where God is not above, but near,
where even the night breathes Christ.

I am the city not of tsars, but of Awaiting,

I am Dust and Light, I am the Path and the Crossing.
Palaces stand in me like penitence,
and every stone remembers the essence of God.

I have known bonfires, and bullets, and frost,
in me a song was forged from the moan of ruin.
I froze through — so that not in bronze a God
might walk as Man, but in those who grew Strong.

I have known the fire that scorched the hearts,
and the ice that stopped the breath in the chest.
I went still — so that you would hear the Dog
that barks in the darkness over Repentance.

I have seen: in the temple — gold and fear,
and in the alley — a woman holding light.

Christ is coming. And not within my tents.
But there, in the “no.” Where all is against the law.

I am the Angel. I stand above the dome,

yet I do not gaze from the heights, but down — into you.
I do not guard the empire, nor the land —
I keep alive in you the living I.

I am not the crown of triumph over others,
not a symbol of power, not even over the self.
I wait for the garments of “ego” to fall,
and you to rise — like light in living water.

In me there is no power, no pride, no ban.
In me — only Light, that softly whispers: “You may...”
I remember each one who was and is no more,
who fell in the mire and rose into the Divine.

I am not the sign of the final eclipse,
not a reliquary for the soulless gaze.
I am the Light within the abandoned decay
that gives you birth again to Life.

I am the city. I stand between two ages,

where snow and ash converge at the break of dawn.
My bridges are like arms beneath the cross,
my streets like lines in the Book of Light.

I remember how they led the Maker to his terror,
and how a soldier walked in his greatcoat toward love.
I have heard: in the dungeons and in the halls
the selfsame weeping — and the selfsame gaze.

In me resounded Lenin and Rasputin,
the chanting choir, and the wordless firing squad.

But through the ages, through each “let us forget,”
One walks alone — in Love, without a fist.

I have known the cold breath of empires,
and famine too, and a hundred black dates.
But in each darkness, in each dying out
I felt — my Brother in God is on his way.

He is not in the icons — in the bolted stairwells.
He is not in museums — in the bread upon the table.
He is in those who walked, demanding no revenge,
but simply bore the Light through the dusky ash.

I am Petersburg. I am made all of awaitings.
In me resounds no hymn, but the silence.
I wait for no feast, for no repentances —
but to be at the Meeting, where you and God are one.

(Christ answers the City)

I hear you.
I was always here — in you.
In your courtyards, where a mother weeps over bread.
In the silence,
in the firing squad,
in the blue,
where the angel watches —
but does not wave the heavens.

I was in you when you summoned tsars.
When you gave birth to poets and to crosses.
I was — when you drove your own like a beast,
and laid an infant’s swaddling in the ice.

You are a city of pain.
But through this pain
I walked.

I did not leave. I stood — and I wait.
You called Me — yet you climbed onto the throne,
forgetting that the throne —
is just a cross in a different row.

But I forgive.
I stand beside the waters.
In me there is no anger,
only revelation.
You lived in darkness —
but the Light is already coming
through the cracks of the old creation.

I will not come —
I am here.
I am in that window,
where the candle burns — not for style, but for grief.
I am in that “Forgive me”
you whisper in the silence,
when you can no longer believe in pride.

I am — here.
In all your crosses and your vaults.
In the tears, in the palaces,
in the stain of old blood.
I am in everyone
who no longer waits for an exodus,
but has simply become
love without conditions.

Сергей Орехов (Панкратиус) · pancratius.ru
CC0 1.0 Universal — public domain
No rights reserved. Copy, translate, distribute, perform, build upon.